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AN  
EPISTLE  
TO  
Mr. PROFESSOR COLEMAN,  
ON THE  
Effects his Practice has had on the Cavalry of the  
United Kingdom:  
WITH  
REMARKS ON A LETTER,  
Printed by Mess. Townsons', Chatham,  
AND ADDRESSED TO  
H. R. H. THE PRINCE REGENT,  
*In avowed Vindication of the said Practice.*

---

Those to whom the curious Letter above alluded to has  
*not been handed*, are informed that it may be seen at the  
Institution, Oxford-Street.

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LONDON:  
Printed for the Author by Ridden, Steel's Court, Lee's Mews,  
Grosvenor-square; and may be had at the Institution for the  
Practical Improvement of Veterinary Science, Oxford-Street  
nearly opposite Bond-Street, and of all Booksellers,  
PRICE ONE SHILLING.

the first time in the history of the world, the  
whole of the human race has been gathered  
together in one place, and that is the  
present meeting of the World's Fair.  
The great number of people here  
from all parts of the world, and the  
large amount of money spent by them,  
will be a great stimulus to the  
development of trade and commerce,  
and will help to bring about a  
more peaceful and happy world.  
The World's Fair is a great  
success, and it is a great honor  
for us to be here at this  
great event.

SF 2 '07

E. C.

Feb 2007

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## An Epistle

TO

### PROFESSOR COLEMAN.

---

Qui dit docteur, ne dit pas toujours un homme docte mais un homme  
qui devroit étre docte

St. REAL.

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SIR,

A publication written avowedly to serve the cause of your veterinary practice, and in condemnation of that which has been for many years practised by Captain Blagrave, and which has, a little time ago, been brought by him more immediately under public attention, the arrogance of which publication is only exceeded by its vulgarity and impertinence, having been put into my hands, I shall not apologize for noticing a few of its prominent parts to you, under whose order or connivance it is not unnatural to suppose it was written.

M323584

The\* person whom you have chosen, or what is, in fact, the same thing, who has taken upon himself to advocate your cause, has, in the abundance of his zeal, thought proper to address his farrago of assertions to a personage who has ever favored all attempts at improvement; and in whom the arts have never failed to meet protection: his name has therefore given it a kind of consequence; otherwise unanswered, and unnoticed might it have remained for me, the very first page being so gloriously absurd as to deter any person whose good opinion is worth a second thought, from cutting open the leaves.

Yet, as your loving relative has taken upon him to doubt whether the Prince Regent has patronized this Institution†, and as its

\* This man, I have heard, was a quondam dealer in bonnets, bombasines, sarsenets and shoe-ties, but when you, his cousin, attained your present rank, spurning the yard-wand, his mighty heart beat also for preferment. Twelve months under your tuition dubbed him doctor; and exchanging his ducapes for a diploma, he slipped into a regiment, where his ignorance might have dozed respectably on through life, had he not, in the plenitude of his vanity floundered before the public in your defence.

† How imperfect must have been his means of obtaining information; for surely even he would not have had the hardihood to have asserted that the Prince's name was used without permission, unless he had really supposed it to have been the case; but if he will condescendingly move his doc-

avowed supporters, whose rank and equestrian knowledge certainly entitle them to much consideration, may feel their actions satirized, and judgments called in question, I take up my pen; not to support Captain Blagrave's system of managing horses---the almost\* invariable success attending its practice speaking loud enough on that head---not to prove that the great personage and the noblemen, &c. who are its supporters,

---

atorial limbs into the offices of the Institution, he may see the permission in the hand-writing of one of H. R. H's principal attendants, *which testimony he will hardly doubt.*

\* Respecting the Institution, I would relate a few facts.---From a conviction of the superiority of the plan of shoeing practised there, I have had repeated opportunities of observing the trials made by the smiths at our end of the town to come at it, and really with considerable ingenuity and effect; indeed, short as is the time since the Institution was opened, it has manifestly operated to improve the general practice of shoeing: not only in London, but its beneficial effects have so far been felt in distant parts of the kingdom, that applications are daily making to Captain Blagrave for instructions, and pupils offering from all quarters. Many who have received their *education* at your College, wandering in the dark as they were left by you, now act upon this system as far as they understand it, and I am of opinion that every one of your pupils would be glad to do it if he had an opportunity; nay, I have little doubt but even *your loving cousin*, convinced of the fallacy of the theory he has attempted to exalt, might be induced to open his eyes on the truth! To have done with this subject, I do not hesitate to affirm that

are not *the dupps of novelty*, which appellation your advocate has unblushingly given them, their known characters falsifying the idea, but merely to amuse them and myself by making a few cursory remarks, and asking a few questions.

Your loving cousin's aspirations after notoriety must have been very fervent indeed!---fervent beyond bearing. Poor man!---and so this letter of his was "a reply to a (kind of) Prospectus, " *said to be* for the improved treatment of the "horses foot, the said *plau* professing to \*be under the immediate patronage of the Prince Regent." Now, really, I wish, that previous to pitching these blundering inuendos in the eyes of the Prince, he had condescended to seek for better information. "He expected too, that

your theory from almost its first introduction has been rapidly declining, and that a system resembling Captain Blagrave's has in a like gradation been rising in the public esteem: this I doubt not is owing to the approbation and celebrity it obtained among military men during the time he was stationed in the Sussex district, and from his communication of it to some particular friends.

\* What *elegance of style!* I observe also in his title-page he says "shoeing the *joot* of the horse": perhaps his next publication may broach a *very* new system, and we may be directed to shoe his tail, or some other absurdity, such as placing the frog on the ground----bars and frog-not to be cut wide-heels in the wrong place,---and the expansion of the foot at every step---as have been *heretofore successfully taught and practised by you!*

" you, Mr. Celeman (as head of the department) would have repelled so calumnious a charge; or at least that you would see the necessity of some reply," but, alas! he was doomed to disappointment---What, you,

" High on a throne apart, superior raised"

to condescend "to answer one so professionally insignificant as Captain Blagrave"!---'twas out of nature---your pen was reserved for higher themes---your movements "In all the majesty of borrowed prose" for an opponent worthy of you; and your amiable advocate was left to himself. But was there no understanding between you? ---no friendly messenger to waft him your wishes? ---had no other means been attempted to answer this formidable Prospectus?---TO DETECT FALACY AND ERROR? It appears not: so he, even he, your cousin, "humble individual," as he says, and as I make doubt he is, arises in his might, sets on, and deals about his dirt with this surprising vigor and dexterity.

Now, Sir, to be serious for a moment, I think it not impossible, and without the aid of divination, to supply a better reason than even professional pride for your silence in this business: Captain Blagrave's Prospectus, without at all mincing the matter, tells you that "however he may admire and acknowledge your anatomical

" skill, he differs with you, *in toto*, as to your  
 " boasted practice of shoeing;" to which he  
 adds, " that the lives and limbs of " many  
 " valuable horses have fallen victims to its  
 " absurdity. Here is no shuffling---and the rea-  
 son appears plain *why* you have not replied---  
 why the task was shifted to your gentlemanly  
 advocate. It is because you could not---it is be-  
 cause you know, that with regard to the living  
 animal you have reasoned and acted upon false  
 principles---principles which on every account,  
 particularly with respect to the noble and costly  
 creature who has so long suffered by them,  
 ought to be retracted. As to Captain Blagrave,  
 he pretends not to professional, that is, anatomical  
 skill---but nobody will doubt his perfect knowl-  
 edge of the living animal, which has been the  
 result of the practice of his whole life, and from  
 repeated and successful trials upon all kinds of sub-  
 jects. Is not knowledge so gained, founded upon  
 a basis far more firm than mere theory? Not that  
 I would decry professional attainments, except  
 when they lead to a promulgation of delusive the-  
 ory, which few will doubt is the case\* with you.

\* I recollect the story of two gentlemen, one of whom had studied at the university, and from thence had emerged, fraught with the greatest part of his original ignorance; and the other, who, with little opportunity of acquiring knowledge, except from self-application, had become no contem-

Your worthy advocate is, it seems, rather startled at observing Mr. Goodwin's name partnered in this horrific Prospectus; and, in order to find an excuse, *most charitably* imputes to him a few trifling peccadilloes, such as quackery, avarice, public imposition, and the like, which motives he asserts have led this gentleman to such professional prostitution and renegadoship. Now these, however *trifling* they may appear to your loving cousin, being rather serious charges, shall shortly be answered seriously. At present, I am called to a subject upon which he and I perfectly agree: He says, "Unfortunately there are men in all ranks, who will sanction what their judgments condemn, (he might have added ---who, in spite of the very noon-day beams of truth will cling to error with the utmost pertinacity, and regardless of who or what suffers, so long as it fills their pockets) " otherwise we "should not have to lament the enormous increase of quacks both in religion and politics,

III.

tible scholar. They were disputing in company about some point in literature, when the former exclaimed " How is it possible for you, who have never been at college, to know anything about the matter?" " Sir," retorted the latter, " from the whole tenor of our argument, it has, I trust, been proved, that it is quite as possible for a man who has not been at school to know a great deal, as it is for one possessed of that advantage, to know nothing." ---*Hoc credo.*

"as well as in medicine, and that in opposition to the most established truths."---Right---right---but let us extend the word *quack* to the ignorant and *imposing member* of every profession, whether regularly or *irregularly* bred---then, if the "powers that be" considered the subject rightly, not only this miserable hacker of hoofs would be sent back to his sarcenets and shoe-ties again, but even some diploma manufacturers themselves might experience a *tremor cordis*. What is your opinion, Sir?

And now for Mr. Goodwin, with whom your *loving cousin* has dealt so liberally. From the general character of that gentleman, it is pretty clear that he is not exactly a proper subject for your relative's *charitable imputations*. I do think that Mr. Goodwin would not sell his name to any system, which, being founded in error, must fall at the first glance of truth, and overwhelm him in its ruins: but, granting that your *amiable advocate* is aware of such impositions being long and successfully practised, and from a kind of self-consciousness so liberally bestows his *benedictions* on Mr. Goodwin, yet the trial is hazardous. The impostor is ever writhing under the fear of detection, which, though delayed, is pretty certain to come at last, and *probably at a time when he is least prepared for it.*

But, Mr. Goodwin, in his junction with Captain Blaggrave, has acted, and acts from convic-

tion. Long before his admission as a student at the Veterinary\* College, he had laboured to perfect himself in the profession he chose to follow. He, as well as Captain Blagrave, admits your anatomical skill, but with respect to the adaptation of many parts of the animal, he differs from you *wholly*. It was by continually witnessing that he learned TO AVOID YOUR ERRORS---from perpetually observing your practice, he was in many instances taught to DETECT ITS FAL-LACY---and, it was by following the dictates of his own reason that he became experienced enough TO ACT IN DIAMETRICAL OPPOSITION TO YOUR PRACTICE.

\* If Mr. Goodwin had gained no more knowledge from his own application than he acquired at the College, he would be a very unfit person to trust with the life or limbs of any animal above the rank of a mill-horse. Nothing but a long, varied and extensive practice could have made his abilities what they are---could have placed him so very far out of the reach of such *clyster-pipes* of the faculty as your worthy advocate. Indeed every rational mind must be convinced how deplorably deficient in system the veterinary art is as taught at the College and practised in the army : and especially if they consider how unlikely it is for the most ingenious man to become sufficiently acquainted with the frame and diseases of the horse in one year to undertake the management of a regiment! Look around at these *sagacious professors*---look at the increasing progress of fatigueness and disease in the army, and then tell me what is the cause? I answer, IGNORANCE AND A WANT OF SYSTEM!

Mr, Goodwin is not to be told that “ there is nothing new in the plan recommended by Captain Blagrave” ; but that *its absurdity* led to the system of shoeing now practised at the Veterinary College, he denies. It was your attachment to your own fanciful theory, that led to the practice, and that in defiance of the admonitions you received---<sup>which</sup> a practice concerning which the less your acute advocate says, the better.

It strikes me, that when your *loving cousin* made the remark, that “ there was nothing new in Captain Blagrave’s plan,” he had not had not had an opportunity of knowing. Captain Blagrave, it is true, says that “ he had tried it upon his own and other horses for twenty years” ; but, had he communicated the secret to him ? I think not : nor, if I am well informed, to any one. Every one *may be trying* to shoe like him, but until he gives the promised explanation, I should suppose, without the desired success.

Your learned advocate, I think, in page the ninth of his *liberal* and ELEGANT epistle, quotes you his preceptor and relative. I agree very cordially to the first part of his quotation ; but to the last, wherein it is stated “ where the frog has been long removed from pressure,\* &c.

\* Captain Blagrave proves that amongst the many evils induced by bringing the frog in contact with the ground, *an abatement in speed is not the least.*

&c. the heel ought to be let down by degrees," I dissent wholly. In short, the whole of the paragraph tends to prove that the nails of our fingers and toes would be better if we let them shoot into talons. Is future, sacred from the knife be each horse's foot. Let frog and hoof commingling lovingly together, jog on in that happy state of equilibrium recommended by your *scientific relative*, thrush, corns, inflammation of the heel, perpetual lameness, and a few other *slight disasters*, will be the only result---and all the farriers shall say, amen! ---It is really curious to see what a painful struggle for notoriety this scribbling mortal has made through every page of his book---painfully pre-eminent must have been that feeling that made him vain enough to suppose his abuse would be noticed in the quarter to which it was directed. But, soaring on the wings of vanity, I make no doubt but in his dream he saw, Wimbledon Common covered with cavalry, and himself, with uplifted hammer, shoeing away before the eyes of admiring Royalty, and confuting the plan of this intruder, Blaggrave. Alas! alas! his hand is not doomed to be exalted in the eyes of Princes, neither shall the *thinness of his heels* be praised by the tongue of Royalty; mute continues the clinking of his hammer, and his shoes shall sink into the oblivion of an old iron shop. Oh, that the mighty of the land would grant thee a trial, thou quon-

dam retailer of ribbands---even that exaltation of thy hammer that thou hast requested : then would the glory of thy abilities be manifested like a red-hot shoe, yea *bright as the virtues of thy own thin-heeled shoe.*

But, to proceed : the advocates for Captain Blagrave's mode of treating the foot of the horse are convinced of its utility, from its being practised *on their own cattle*; but it is not in the power of the god of eloquence himself to convince even your most partial friend, and that upon the most general and loose principles, that yours has succeeded in any one instance.

And so, this vender of ribbands had a diploma from the Veterinary College ! Now, really, a diploma granted on the strength of one year's study, and to a man whose youth had been spent in handling the scissars and the yard-wand, puts one in mind of the degrees formerly disposed of by the elders of a certain celebrated northern university, from whom interest or money might procure the highest scholastic honors without considering who was dubbed doctor---'till a wag having actually succeeded in procuring the degree of Master of Arts for his valet, put a stop to the practice. I am far from imputing wilful indifference either to those who granted his diploma, or gave him a regiment of cavalry to superintend, being well aware whose recommendation it was they trusted implicitly to. It was

yours ; and thus your loving cousin stepped from a counter into a curricule\*. Whenever the confidence reposed in high official characters is abused, either through their own indolence or the unworthiness of their understrappers, the whole country suffers---Alas ! *that in speaking of professors we do not always speak of learned men, but only of those who should be learned !*

As a member of that community whose bounty you are enjoying, I shall now assert my right to ask you a few questions, which the public, as well as your immediate employers, have an imperious claim upon you to answer to their satisfaction. If those who conferred this bounty upon you dozed under the soporific influence of your plausible theories, that is no longer the case. Open to conviction, and *as they ought* to be, alive to the public interest, they behold the mist dispersing, and nothing less than direct answers will be satisfactory. A few flimsy lectures, interlarded with high-sounding technical phrases, while the practice is in such a deplorable state ; while lameness and disease with unarrested progress vitiate both the camp and the country, and *yearly annihilate thousands of the public money*

\* Since writing the above I have been informed it was a *barouche* ; which, as soon as he became *militized*, he actually spr<sup>t</sup>d!!!--But, melancholy was the event, and dolorous the fall of his pride!

are very unsatisfactory, and the time is arrived when truth must be elicited from you: when practical improvement, whether officially or *unofficially*, springing to the light, must supersede mere theory, however plausible and vauntingly exhibited on the dead subject.—I claim a privilege to ask you—First, Whether there is any *practical* system at all of the veterinary art taught at the College of which you are *professor*? Secondly, Whether, if there be *any* system taught, is there one, or how many, instances of a pupil of yours succeeding in practice who has implicitly adopted it? And, Thirdly, Is it not well known that those who have succeeded, have been those only, who were bold and ingenious enough to abandon that system, and to form and act upon one of their own? Fourthly, Is it not true that lame, glandered and mangy cattle swarm both in the camp and the country, and that you yourself are ashamed of having promulgated your visionary theories? These questions will be most easy for you to answer, if your mind feels its own ability and its own rectitude; for next to being faultless, is the acknowledgement of error; but you must use more convincing language than your *worthy* relatives—that it will be more *gentlemanly*, I cannot doubt.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

*A Subscriber to the Oxford-Street Institution*

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*Second Edition.*

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A

LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO

*HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS*

THE PRINCE REGENT,

IN

VINDICATION

OF THE

SYSTEM OF SHOEING

THE

FOOT OF THE HORSE,

AS PRACTISED BY THE

VETERINARY COLLEGE,

IN REPLY TO AN ATTACK CONTAINED IN AN ADDRESS TO  
THE BRITISH PUBLIC, RECOMMENDING A DIFFERENT  
PLAN OF SHOEING, ETC. BY CAPTAIN BLAGRAVE.

WITH REMARKS ON THE LATE SCURRILOUS

"EPISTLE TO PROFESSOR COLEMAN, Esq."

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BY

GEORGE PRICE,

Ordnance Veterinary Surgeon to the Medway District, and formerly  
of the Twentieth Dragoons.

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